

In the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of the claims in the instant application:

Claims 1-92 (Canceled)

Claim 93 (Previously Presented) A food additive composition comprising: (a) an edible solubilizing agent; (b) an effective amount of a suitable dispersant; (c) an effective amount of an antioxidant; and (d) an ester prepared by reacting at least one first reactant selected from the group consisting of sterols, stanols, and combinations thereof with at least one second reactant selected from the group consisting of carboxylic acids and carboxylic acid esters in the presence of a catalytically effective amount of a catalyst selected from the group consisting of calcium oxide, calcium hydroxide, a calcium salt of a carboxylic acid, magnesium hydroxide and combinations thereof.

Claim 94 (Previously Presented) The composition according to claim 93, wherein the at least one first reactant comprises β -sitosterol.

Claim 95 (Previously Presented) The composition according to claim 93, wherein the at least one first reactant comprises β -sitostanol.

Claim 96 (Previously Presented) The composition according to claim 93, wherein the catalyst comprises calcium hydroxide, calcium oxide or a calcium salt of a carboxylic acid.

Claim 97 (Previously Presented) The composition according to claim 93, wherein the at least one second reactant comprises a carboxylic acid having from about 2 to 22 carbon atoms.

Claim 98 (Previously Presented) The composition according to claim 93, wherein the catalyst comprises calcium oxide.

Claim 99 (Previously Presented) The composition according to claim 93, wherein the at least one second reactant comprises a mixture of long chain carboxylic acids derived from an oil selected from the group consisting of sunflower oil, palm kernel oil, coconut oil, rape seed oil, tallow, corn oil, canola oil, linseed oil, palm oil, olive oil, sesame oil, and safflower oil.

Claim 100 (Previously Presented) The composition according to claim 93, wherein the at least one second reactant comprises a carboxylic acid ester.

Claim 101 (Previously Presented) The composition according to claim 100, wherein the at least one first reactant comprises β -sitosterol.

Claim 102 (Previously Presented) The composition according to claim 100, wherein the at least one first reactant comprises β -sitostanol.

Claim 103 (Previously Presented) The composition according to claim 100, wherein the catalyst comprises calcium hydroxide, calcium oxide or a calcium salt of a carboxylic acid.

Claim 104 (Previously Presented) The composition according to claim 103, wherein the at least one second reactant comprises a carboxylic acid ester having from about 2 to 22 carbon atoms.

Claim 105 (Previously Presented) The composition according to claim 103, wherein the at least one second reactant comprises a methyl ester of a C₆₋₂₂ fatty acid or a triglyceride.

Claim 106 (Previously Presented) The composition according to claim 93, wherein the edible solubilizing agent comprises a vegetable oil.

Claim 107 (Previously Presented) The composition according to claim 93, wherein the antioxidant comprises a tocopherol.

Claim 108 (Previously Presented) The composition according to claim 93, wherein the dispersant comprises an alkyl polyglycoside.

Claim 109 (Previously Presented) A food additive composition comprising: (a) an edible solubilizing agent; (b) an effective amount of a suitable dispersant; (c) an effective amount of an antioxidant; and (d) an ester prepared by reacting β -sitostanol with a carboxylic acid ester in the presence of an effective amount of calcium oxide.

Claim 110 (Previously Presented) A method of reducing the absorption of cholesterol into the bloodstream of a mammal, said method comprising: (i) providing a food additive composition comprising: (a) an edible solubilizing agent; (b) an effective amount of a suitable dispersant; (c) an effective amount of an antioxidant; and (d) an ester prepared by

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reacting at least one first reactant selected from the group consisting of sterols, stanols, and combinations thereof with at least one second reactant selected from the group consisting of carboxylic acids and carboxylic acid esters in the presence of a catalytically effective amount of a catalyst selected from the group consisting of calcium oxide, calcium hydroxide, a calcium salt of a carboxylic acid, magnesium hydroxide and combinations thereof; (ii) combining the food additive with a cholesterol-containing food; and (iii) administering the combined food and food additive to a mammal.